

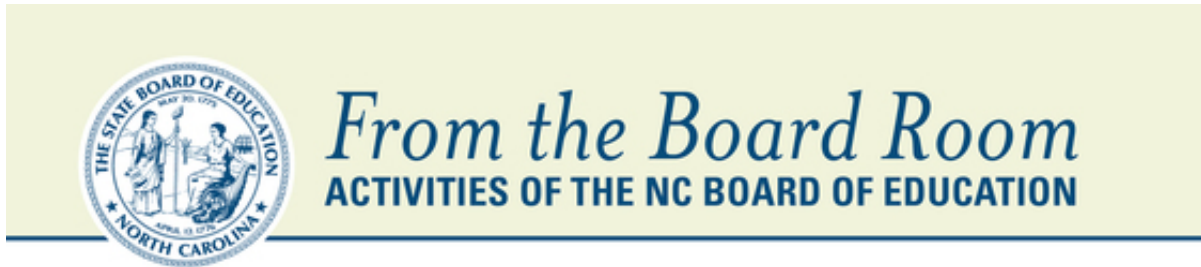
November 2017 From the Board Room

North Carolina Public Schools

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NOVEMBER 2017

The State Board of Education is comprised of the State Treasurer, the Lieutenant Governor and 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. This newsletter highlights the Board's activities on behalf of the 1.5 million public school students in our state and the more than 100,000 educators who provide services to children. You may view all State Board of Education member and advisor information [online](#). To access current and archived versions of From the Boardroom, visit the State Board of Education's [website](#).

Biannual Planning/Work Session Precedes Monthly Meeting

State Board members met last Tuesday and Wednesday on the Centennial Campus of North Carolina State University for their biannual planning and work session.

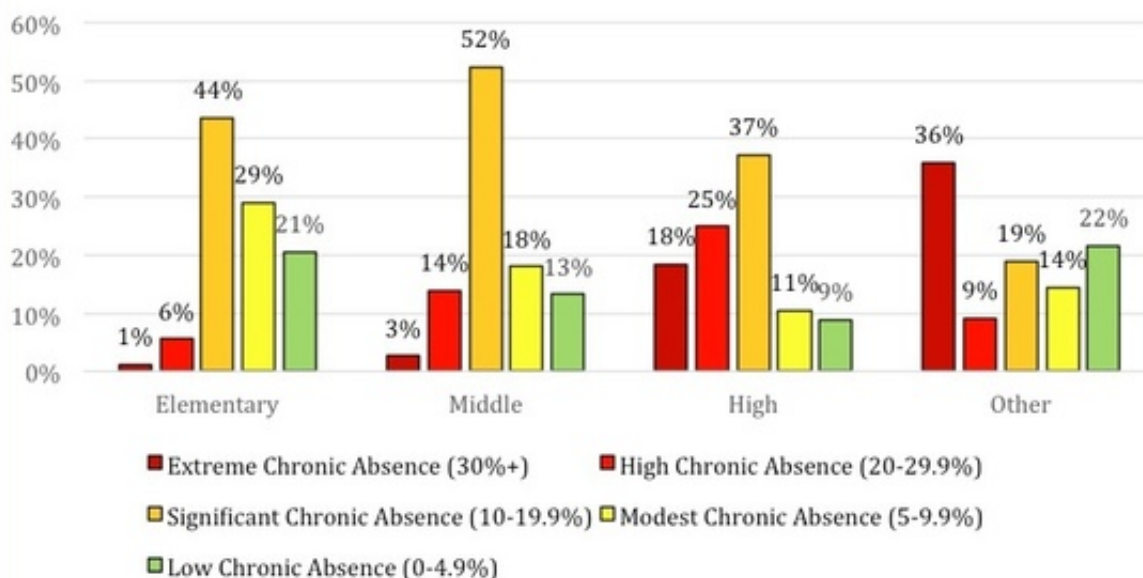
Over a day and a half, members heard a number of presentations including those on local district whole-child pilot programs, cross-divisional efforts at the department to support low-performing schools, building equity into the education system, and credit recovery.

One of the presentations that received significant discussion focused on chronic absenteeism.

According to the Office of Civil Rights, during the 2013-14 academic school year, 207,837 North Carolina students missed 15 days or more of school accounting for approximately 14 percent of the state's student population.

Chronic absenteeism is a significant problem that impacts all school levels in the educational system. Historically, chronic absenteeism and the ensuing discussion focused at the high school level, specifically ninth grade. Even though chronic absenteeism among ninth graders is the top predictor for on-time high school graduation, research consistently indicates that adverse effects of chronic absenteeism begin before students enter kindergarten.

Chronic Absence Levels for North Carolina Schools Vary by Grades Served



From a national perspective, chronic absenteeism impacts multiple layers of the educational system and community. Chronically absent students face adverse life outcomes such as economic hardship, employment difficulties, less stable career patterns and higher rates of unemployment.

Students who are identified as chronically absent are more likely to drop out of school. Additionally, according to the Washington State Center for Court Research, 50 percent of all truants ended up with a criminal charge by age 18, compared to 12 percent of non-truant students. This is due to a high percentage of chronically absent students being unsupervised during the school day.

North Carolina has an opportunity to create actionable steps to address chronic absenteeism across the grades beginning with establishing a common definition. Other recommendations include tracking chronic absenteeism at the school, district, region and state levels, and providing actionable steps for addressing chronic absenteeism, including strengthening school and community resources, such as developing early warning systems, creating preventive measures, and ensuring families have access to needed community resources.

From the robust discussions that followed the various presentations, Board members revised and approved their Strategic Plan. State Board Chairman Bill Cobey said the ability to meet the revised goals would depend in large part on the staffing and resources at the state agency.



Southside Ashpole Elementary Selected for Innovative School District

Southside Ashpole Elementary School (Public Schools of Robeson County) will be the first North Carolina public school selected for the new statewide Innovative School District (ISD) beginning in the 2018-19 academic year. State Board members unanimously

approved ISD Superintendent Eric Hall's recommendation to include the Robeson school based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis that included an extensive review of school performance data and discussions with the local school board chair, district leaders, school administrators and community members.

State Board Chairman Bill Cobey said the Board would continue to monitor the progress of the district and looked forward to seeing academic improvement for the students at Southside Ashpole Elementary.

"It is imperative that we employ new ways to improve educational outcomes for students," Cobey said, "and the Innovative School District is designed to do just that."

Public Schools of Robeson County has until Feb. 1, 2018 either to accept the transfer of Southside Ashpole Elementary school into the ISD or close the school altogether, an option allowed under the legislation creating the statewide district.

The ISD staff is currently in the process of evaluating and selecting the right transformation team to work in partnership with the Rowland community and to manage the operations at Southside Ashpole Elementary. Applicants are expected to consider the opinions, values and school-related goals of parents and community members. Third-party evaluators will assess potential turnaround partners with selection expected to occur in January or February.

The State Board expects to select up to five qualifying schools for transfer to the ISD over the next few years. The ISD was created to help improve academic outcomes for children in some of the state's lowest performing schools. Visit the [ISD website](#) for more information.

Board Approves Several Charter Recommendations

Cardinal Charter Academy West Campus fast-track application was approved. The original charter school opened in August 2014 in Cary (Wake County) for K-6 students and subsequently added seventh and eighth grades. The school will expand to K-10 when it opens in Chatham County in August 2019. It is projected to serve almost 2,200 students when it later adds eleventh and twelfth grades. The school, which will be based in Chatham County, is expected to pull students from Chatham and Wake counties.

The North Carolina Charter Schools Advisory Board's recommendation to initiate immediate revocation of Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy's charter received unanimous approval. The recommendation to revoke the charter was based on concerns over financial, governance and operational issues at the school. The school has 60 days to appeal the State Board's decision to the Office of Administrative Hearings. Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy opened to students in 2014 and is based in Bertie County. Fewer than 200 students currently attend the K-6 school.

Three charter schools were approved as alternative schools for accountability purposes. Central Wake Charter High (Wake County Schools), and Commonwealth High and Stewart Creek High (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools) will employ an alternative accountability model to assess student performance beginning this school year.

Board Recognizes Governor Morehead School for the Blind Employee

Governor Morehead School for the Blind Residential Life Staffer Laura Wooten received a Certificate of Recognition from Board members for her recent receipt of the Principals of Schools for the Blind 2017 *Outstanding Residential Life Staff Member of the Year* award. The annual national award recognizes the contributions of individuals from around the United States who work with students who are blind or who have vision impairments.

Wooten received nominations from school staff, students, parents and community partners for her outstanding contributions in the areas of student support, community partnerships and administrative leadership.



From left to right: State Board member Amy White, Governor Morehead School for the Blind Superintendent Barbria Bacon, State Superintendent Mark Johnson, Laura Wooten, State Board Chairman Bill Cobey and State Board member Tricia Willoughby

SBE Highlights: A [checklist](#) of Board actions is posted every month at the conclusion of the meeting. The State Board of Education's next meeting will be held Dec. 6-7 in the 7th Floor Board Room, Education Building, 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, NC. Board materials will be available [online](#) by clicking on the Meetings tab.



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